

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of: Xiaoyu Li et al.

Serial No.: 10/787,426

Confirmation No.: 4773

Group Art Unit: 3616

Filed: February 26, 2004

Examiner: Ilan, Ruth

For: COLLAPSIBLE STEERING COLUMN ASSEMBLY

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

On December 6, 2006, Applicants' Representative, Chris Andrzejak, conducted a telephonic interview with Examiner Ilan. An Interview Summary Form was prepared and signed by the Examiner on December 20, 2006, setting forth the substance of the interview. The subject Interview Summary is provided to supplement the Examiner's Interview Summary Form.

To complete the Interview Summary Form, an exhibit was not shown and a demonstration did not take place.

As mentioned in the Examiner's Interview Summary Form, claim 1 was specifically discussed. In particular, the discussions related to the claim element of "retaining structural integrity", as it relates to the claimed elongated element, and the Examiner's statements with regard to this element in the Final Office Action. The Applicants noted that the Examiner

has misinterpreted “retaining structural integrity” to mean only that the strap, i.e., the elongated element, can withstand at least 300 psi without breaking. The Applicants’ Representative noted that paragraph [0003] provides the proper definition of the phrase “retaining structural integrity” by explaining that once the metal straps of the prior art are deformed, they lose structural integrity and must be replaced. The example of bending a paperclip was used to illustrate the principle of loss of structural integrity by deformation. The Examiner agreed that her interpretation was wrong, but questioned the apparent contradictory indication in paragraph [0017] that a metal strap is the preferred elongated element. The Applicants noted that it is possible to have a metal strap that retains structural integrity or that does not deform after use, and that this can be achieved with thin metal straps. Upon conclusion of the substantive discussion, the Examiner indicated that she would prefer to speak with other Examiners regarding the substance of our discussion, but that she was inclined to allow the claims on the basis of the discussions. The Examiner indicated that she would be unlikely to make such decisions without the filing of an RCE.

Upon follow-up from the Applicants’ Representative on January 16, 2007, the Examiner indicated that she had not spoken with other Examiners with regard to the substance of the interview on December 6, 2006, and that she would not take further action until the filing of an RCE.

Although no fees are believed due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge our Deposit Account No. 08-2789 for any fees or credit the account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

HOWARD & HOWARD ATTORNEYS, P.C.

January 17, 2007

Date

/Christopher S. Andrzejak/

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